

time to go out." Her frigid manner seemed to put him miles away.

He made another attempt.

"I meant—it may have been very presumptuous of me—but I thought that—I might be of some use to you—if you would let me—in your writing."

That was not what he had meant to say; he longed to take from her that daily care about ways and means, he longed to make her tell him something of the difficulty and struggle, and then to beg her to let him take the burden on his shoulders for ever. But she construed it all amiss, and thought that he was affecting the patron to compensate her for the loss of a lover.

"Thank you, but I do not need any help. Mr. Jasper is very kind to me."

There was a pause, during which a thrush in the chestnut tree sang louder than ever.

"By the way," she said, to change the subject, "my sister is making one of Mrs. Redfern's party."

"And you?" he asked with sudden eagerness.

"No," she said, "I don't care about it, but she will enjoy it very much. Everything is new to her at present."

"She is a charming girl," he said heartily. If Elizabeth would not talk about herself, this sister might form a convenient pretext for intimate conversation. "She is so fresh and natural; it is no wonder that she is so popular. Redfern raves about her, would like to put her in his next picture, he tells me, if she will sit to him."

"Oh, I hope not!" cried Elizabeth in sudden alarm.

"So do I!" he exclaimed so fervently that all her previous suspicions were confirmed.

"The fact is," he went on, still trying to lead the conversation into confidential channels, "your sister is almost too young to be left to manage much for herself."

"She will have Mrs. Jasper and Mrs. Redfern," answered Elizabeth coldly, resenting his remark, partly because it betrayed so much interest in her sister, and partly because of the implied hint at neglect on her own part.

"That is true, but they are both women of the world, and you know as well as I do that they consider a rich marriage the most desirable goal of a girl's career. I think Mrs. Jasper had a great disappointment the other night."

"Indeed!" said Elizabeth, with the air of a

duchess, and he at once perceived that he had gone too far.

"I beg your pardon," he said. "I see, you think me impertinent. But your sister herself took me into her confidence."

"Oh, dear!" thought Elizabeth. "What has Gladys been doing?" But aloud she only said, with an almost imperceptible shade of irony in her tone—

"That was very sweet of her."

"And that," he went on, blundering more and more, "made me feel that I should like to help her—to help both of you—to have some right to—I am going to Maidenhead also; you may trust me to see that she is well taken care of."

"Thank you very much," she answered, trying to speak graciously. She gave a little shudder and got up. "It is getting cold, I think, and I must go back." They walked slowly towards the gate, where he called a cab and put her in it.

When Gladys came in from Mrs. Jasper's, she found that her sister had gone to bed with a bad headache.

Next day, however, Elizabeth managed to pull herself together and to go on with her work as usual. It was a busy week, for she had to help Gladys prepare for her visit, and, moreover, the proofs of her first long story began to come in. She hurried feverishly from one thing to another, finding her only consolation in incessant activity. She dreaded the pause that would come as soon as Gladys had set off and she was left alone without the necessity of perpetual self-control. For the hardest, yet perhaps the most salutary part of her grief was the obligation to keep it so sedulously concealed; the effort to appear unconcerned did actually induce a kind of indifference; yet she knew that when the circumstances that impelled disguise were withdrawn, the reaction would be all the more painful and dangerous.

And so, when she had seen her sister drive away with Mrs. Jasper to the station, it was with only a mixed feeling of relief that she found herself alone. She had plenty of time now, for her book and Gladys were both out of the way; yet she did not welcome the leisure, nor did she feel energetic enough to make any fresh plans. Her evening lectures had ended with the winter session, and now the time that she had anticipated with so much joy as a partial holiday had at length arrived, she felt that some engrossing employment

would have been preferable. All the colour had gone out of life; she seemed to have come to the end of all things, and even the approaching publication of her book seemed to her of little account. Incapable of invention, she tried to study, and turned once more to the reading-room of the British Museum. The sight of the huge place, thronged with men and women of all ages, eagerly cramming the information that they would presently disgorge into more printed pages, filled her with disgust even for literature. All life was to her flat, stale, and unprofitable.

This morbid state of mind was really the effect of extreme physical exhaustion, but there was no one to notice her pale face and heavy eyes, or to tell her that she must rest. But one day, getting off an omnibus at the corner of Tottenham Court Road, she suddenly found that the world had grown dark around her, and that the babel of street noises sounded dim and far away. She stood still a moment, and recovered herself sufficiently to walk to her rooms.

"I believe I am going to be ill," she thought to herself; and then there came a sudden vision of the cool shade of lime-trees, and the pink blossom of may-tree that waved over a sacred corner in the churchyard at home. If she could only get there, all would be well with her.

How she did it she never knew; but she managed to put a few things in a bag, and to take the next train to Whiteham. The hot afternoon sun blazed on the windows of the compartment, but as the day wore on, it grew cooler, and long refreshing shadows lay underneath the faint green of the trees. How sweet and cool was the evening air as she got out at the little station! The scent of full-uddered cows came from a farmyard near, and a quiet star or two began to glimmer in the pale sky, from which the rosy flush of sunset was slowly fading. As she toiled wearily up the dewy road it was still light enough for her to discern a well-known figure that was approaching. She hastened to it with a little cry of relief.

Her father regarded her with a look of mingled delight and alarm.

"What, Bessie! Is anything the matter? Is Gladys ill?"

"No, nothing." She flung her arms round his neck. "Only I have come home. Aren't you glad to see me? Oh, father, I am so tired!"

(To be concluded.)

## A SILK PURSE IN CROCHET-WORK.

*Directions.*—Our pattern is worked in stripes of crimson and gold-coloured purse silk in cross-stitch crochet, which is simply double-crochet, only you put the hook over the wool instead of under as in the ordinary way. A tiny pattern is worked at regular intervals on the stripes with a needle and variegated silks.

Fancy rings and tiny gilded acorns complete our materials.

The purse is crocheted lengthwise although in rounds or rows.

To begin, make a chain of 75 stitches in crimson silk.

On this crochet 11 rows of cross-stitch.

Now comes a gold stripe of 2 rows as follows:—

*1st Row.*—1 ordinary double-crochet stitch, 1 chain, 1 hook in the next stitch, repeat from beginning.

*2nd Row.*—1 ordinary stitch, 1 chain, 1 in the next hole, repeat from beginning.

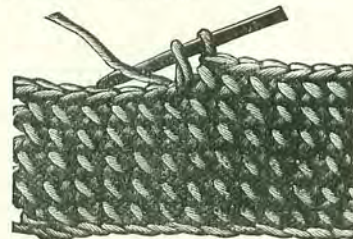
After this the red stripe is repeated.

In carrying out Row 6 the slashing is worked in.

For this make a chain of 50 stitches, miss 50 cross-stitches, and then repeat for 6 rows.

Then work alternately a gold-coloured stripe, and a stripe of 11 crimson cross-stitch rows.

When all the crochet is done, work the pattern in olive-green and gold-coloured silk according to illustration.



One pattern or stitch occupies or covers one whole cross-stitch.

Now sew the edges of the purse together on the wrong side.

The slashing or slit is bordered with a row of cross-stitch. As a finish sew the acorns on the ends.

